

**January 1, 2001 – ANNUAL REPORT  
June 30, 2002**

**MOJAVE DESERT RESOURCE CONSERVATION DISTRICT  
17330 BEAR VALLEY RD, #106, VICTORVILLE, CA 92392**

*Meetings are held the first Tuesday of each month at 5:30 P.M. at the District Office located at 17330  
Bear Valley Rd, #106, Victorville, CA 92392*

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

President.....Mary Ann Salyards  
Vice President.....J. Peter Lounsbury  
Secretary/Treasurer.....James L. Cox  
Director.....Chuck Bell  
Director.....Neville Slade

**ASSOCIATE DIRECTORS**

Associate Director.....Paul H. Johnson  
Associate Director.....Lesley Benjamin  
Associate Director.....John Duncan  
Associate Director.....Tom Irwin  
Associate Director.....Joseph Monroe

**DISTRICT STAFF**

District Coordinator.....Jackie Lindgren  
Assistant District Coordinator.....Dana Raponi  
Public Relations/Education Coordinator.....Christie Robinson  
Project Coordinator.....Valerie Page

**TECHNICAL STAFF**

**USDA NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE**

District Conservationist.....Rick Aguayo  
Area Resource Soil Scientist ..... Peter Fahnestock  
Area Engineer ..... Robert Miller  
Johnson Valley Soil Survey Project Leader .....Carrie-Ann Houdeshell

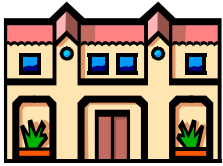
## HIGHLIGHTS OF CONSERVATION ACTIVITIES



New Cooperators	625
New Acres Under Cooperative Agreement	468 ac.
Conservation Plan Acres	1,637 ac.
EQIP Applications	13
Government Agencies Assisted	36
Irrigation Mainline	2,329 ft
Irrigation Water Management	194 acres
Water Savings	917.4 ac-ft/year
Water Efficient Planting-Rural/Urban Areas	11,319 plants
	Approx. 2.3 acres protected from wind erosion
Windbreak Planting	7,163 trees
	Approx. 71,630 linear feet of windbreak
Windbreak Area Protected-Rural Areas	Approx. 493 acres of downwind protection

## NEW DIGS

The district finally moved into their new office space in July 2001. The location is a brand new office complex located in the Bear Valley Business Park in Victorville. We are co-located with NRCS and Rural Development to maintain the U.S. Department of Agriculture Service Center concept. Our new address is:



Mojave Desert RCD  
17330 Bear Valley Rd., #106  
Victorville, CA 92392  
Phone: 760-843-6882, ext. 100  
Fax: 760-843-9521

## 2001-2002 ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY INCENTIVE PROGRAM (EQIP)

In order to meet the water conservation needs of agricultural producers in San Bernardino and Los Angeles County, the District has sponsored and participated in the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Services' Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP). Under this program Local Work Groups (LWG) were established to assist NRCS in designating high priority areas that needed additional technical, educational, and financial assistance. The LWG was responsible for providing recommendations to NRCS on setting the priorities, determining acceptable practices and establishing cost share rates.

Agricultural producers who apply for the EQIP program are converting less efficient irrigation systems (flood irrigation, sprinkler wheel lines, or old center pivot systems) to higher efficiency Low Energy Precision Application (LEPA) irrigation systems. For the 2001 program year the average water savings per field is estimated to be 4.5 ac-ft per acre per year and an average system efficiency increase of 33 percent. For the 2002 program year the average water savings per field is estimated to be 3.1 ac-ft per acre per year and an average system efficiency increase of 27 percent. The new irrigation systems installed also have electrical energy savings ranging from 25 to 33 percent annually.



Funding for the 2001 program was \$95,000, which was enough money to provide financial assistance to five agricultural producers. For this years EQIP program (2002) our GPA received a total of \$95,000; however, this amount is not enough to meet the demand from the eight applicants who applied for the EQIP program. In order to fulfill the needs of all eight applicants we would need approximately \$110,000.

Due to the recent passage of the 2002 Farm Bill, all EQIP funding for the 2002 EQIP program has been put on hold until final guidelines have been established to meet the new farm bill requirements.

### **2001 ENVIROTHON**

Due to the generous support of our co-sponsors, the district was able to send a team from Lucerne Valley High School (LVHS) to the Envirothon competition this year. The “Desert Rats” are a young and enthusiastic team and hope to compete again in 2002. This year the contest was held at Pine Springs Ranch in Mountain Home Center, California, which is located five miles from Idyllwild. The Envirothon is an exceptional opportunity for our young adults to compete in a hands-on team competition designed to challenge high school students to explore the natural world around them. During the competition students are tested in their knowledge of natural resources in five categories: Aquatics, Forestry, Soils, Wildlife and a current issue, which was “Urban Non-Point Source Pollution.”



### **2002 ENVIROTHON**

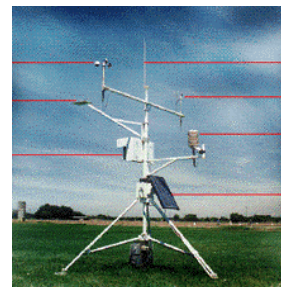
Our district, due once again to its charitable co-sponsors, sent three teams to the Envirothon this year. The statewide contest was held at ECCO Lodge, just outside of Yosemite. One of the teams from Silver Valley H.S. placed 9th overall. This was a great accomplishment for a first-time team.

### **WILDLIFE HABITAT INCENTIVE PROGRAM (WHIP)**

One applicant has applied for this program. The applicant plans on creating a wildlife habitat buffer between a golf course and residential homes. Proposed vegetative plantings will provide protective cover, nesting areas, and food for wildlife. Planning is still in progress for this WHIP project.

### **CIMIS STATIONS**

The District continues to operate two CIMIS stations, one located in Victorville at Victor Valley College and one in Barstow at the Sewage Treatment Plant. The District has established two hotline phone numbers and a webpage ([www.mdrcd.ca.gov](http://www.mdrcd.ca.gov)) to make CIMIS data easily accessible. This information will assist in scheduling irrigations by providing evapotranspiration data, rainfall and other information. The hotline is updated Monday through Friday. If you live in the Victorville, Apple Valley, Hesperia, or Lucerne Valley area call 760-261-3346. For those living in the Barstow, Lenwood, Helendale, Yermo or Newberry Springs area, call 760-261-3326.



## **2001 FALL BUS TOUR**

The District's annual fall bus tour was held on October 18 and 19. The tour included stops in the Hinkley area to discuss PG&E mitigation with alfalfa growers, nitrate concerns with local dairies, and the Chromium 6 issues. Guest speakers included Wayne Soppeland, alfalfa grower, and Eldon Heaston, Mojave Desert Air Quality Management District. We also visited the Mojave Water Agency's Recharge Basin and the Molycorp Mine. The day ended with an above-ground tour of Davis Dam in Laughlin and lodging at the Colorado Belle. On the second day Rob Blair addressed grazing concerns in the Ivanpah Valley, located within the Mojave Preserve. Rob is a rancher whose family had been in the area for more than five generations. A representative from National Park Service informed us of a revegetation project to reclaim a 22 mile area where AT&T recently pulled up cable. A brief stop at the U.C. Desert Research Center, followed by a tour of a pharmaceutical grade lime quarry, led us to our final destination – CADIZ, Inc. CADIZ is one of California's largest citrus and grape growers. A busy, but very informative two days was had by all!



## **2001 PLANT SALE**

The district held its annual plant sale selling 10,000 windbreak trees and water efficient shrubs. The sale, which was held March 16 and 17 at Victor Valley College, was a huge success with 29 different varieties of plants being offered. Each year our public response grows and everyone looks forward to the next sale. We have formed a good partnership with the college and the sale works out well for both entities.



## **2002 PLANT SALE**

With the High Desert area continuing to increase in population, the need for desert adaptive plants continues to increase as well. Because of this, the district changed the name of their annual sale to the "Desert Adaptive Plant Sale." This year perennial color plants as well as the windbreak trees and water efficient plants were offered. The sale was held April 5 and 6 and was again a big success. Twenty-seven different varieties were offered with most being sold during the pre-sale.

## **TRAINING SESSION**



Jenny Pickel from DOC came down to facilitate a one-day training session for directors, associate directors and staff. This was a very worthwhile session and helped participants identify district goals and director's responsibilities.

## **2001 FALL GARDEN WORKSHOP**



The District held its first garden workshop for homeowners. Christie Robinson held the workshop "Fall Pruning" and the guest speaker was Larry Shane, Certified Arborist with Hesperia Parks & Recreation. The class, originally scheduled for 26 people, had to be expanded to 36 because the response was so great. The workshop was held at Victor Valley Community College in their Natural Resources and Agriculture Department.

## **2002 SPRING GARDEN WORKSHOP**

The district hosted a two-hour workshop on March 9<sup>th</sup> at Victor Valley Community College titled “Plant Selection and Care for the High Desert.” Twenty-two participants were in attendance for the workshop, which included a mini-master garden manual. The next workshop is expected to be held this fall with the topic being Pistachios.



## **PROJECT WET**



Christie Robinson is now a certified “Project Wet” facilitator. Project Wet (Water Education for Teachers) is an international, interdisciplinary, water, science and education program for formal and non-formal educators of K-12 students. As a facilitator, the district is able to provide educators, resource managers, and community leaders with training in ground water, water conservation, watersheds, and water resources. These topics and other activities promote problem solving skills that help provide young people with the knowledge and experience they will need to make informed decisions regarding water resource management.

## **HIGH DESERT MASTER GARDENER COURSE**



The district is in the process of developing and becoming the lead agency of a High Desert Master Gardener Course. This will be a 16-week course and topics are designed for the high desert environment. This course will be offered in the fall of 2002. Other agencies involved are City of Victorville, Victor Valley Community College(VVCC), and the High Desert & Mountain Integrated Waste Management, JPA. The program site will be located on the VVCC campus, lower level.

## **STORM WATER GRANT (PROP 13 NPDES)**



The district has submitted a grant for the High Desert-Storm Water Phase II Awareness Impact Project. If awarded, the project will take place with the cooperation of six urbanized cities in San Bernardino, Los Angeles and Kern Counties, and will evaluate the effect of influencing seven and twelve year old individuals in practicing pollution prevention. The program will result in 80 visual demonstrations about sediment transport in urban runoff and will have the potential of influencing individuals within the three counties. The project will also include a ROP/High School Oil Recycling program.

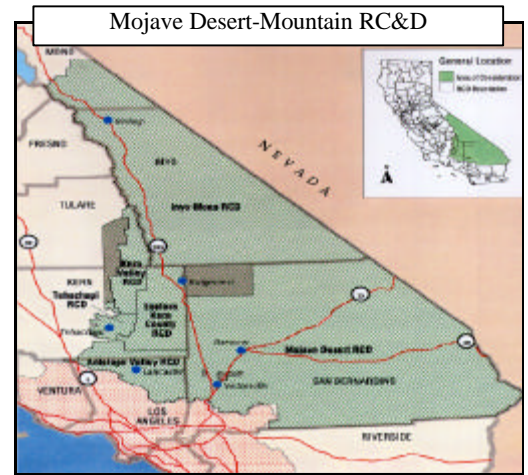
## **PARTNERSHIP WITH THE BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT (BLM)**

The district is continuing their partnership with BLM for assisting in the rehabilitation of riparian and upland resources on BLM lands in the Mojave Desert. This agreement funds district employees for the supervision, transportation and logistical support of inmate labor crews involved in desert restoration. This agreement has been on going since 1995.



## **RC&D**

The dream of Director Pete Lounsbury for the High Desert area obtaining authorization as an official USDA Resource Conservation and Development Area (RC&D) became a reality. Dan Glickman, Secretary of Agriculture, announced the authorization on January 4, 2001. The Mojave Desert-Mountain RC&D (MD-MRC&D) was one of three California RC&D's that were authorized. The MD-MRC&D is the largest RC&D encompassing more than 23 million acres of land which is within 6 counties (Inyo, Kern, Los Angeles, Mono, San Bernardino, and Tulare County). The Steering Committee, RC&D Council and the efforts of the Mojave Desert RCD staff (Jackie Lindgren, Dana Raponi, Nikki Grieci, and Valerie Page) provided an outstanding effort towards the authorization efforts.



Jack Wright was chosen as the new RC&D Coordinator and took office on July 30, 2001. This position should greatly assist the RC&D in focusing its goals and developing projects. The new office address is:

Mojave Desert-Mountain RC&D  
1525 N. Norma Street, #C  
Ridgecrest, CA 93555

## **MOJAVE WEED MANAGEMENT AREA (MWMA)**

The district is taking the lead in coordinating the Mojave Weed Management Area (MWMA), but all public land managers and private landowners concerned with noxious weeds are encouraged to participate. The main objectives are identifying target species, developing education/outreach programs, and selecting appropriate mapping/ground projects.



The first on-the-ground project (using SB1740 funding) is scheduled to start in 2002 and will consist of removing Saltcedar (*Tamarix ramosissima*) and Giant Reed (*Arundo donax*) at the Lewis Center for Educational Research, located at the Mojave River Narrows. This project supports the Lewis Center's plan for restoration along this section of the Mojave River.

A pilot control project for Sahara mustard (*Brassica tournefortii*) will begin fall 2002 and continue through fall 2003 in the Johnson Valley OHV Area. The MWMA is seeking matching federal funds through the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation to expand this project to include Joshua Tree National Park. Sahara mustard is rapidly spreading throughout the California desert and identifying and eradicating new populations of this species will be a major focus for the MWMA. These projects should provide valuable information concerning effective control methods for this noxious weed.

## **SOIL SURVEYS**

The Phase I portion of the Joshua Tree National Park Soil Survey was completed in March 2001. A preliminary report was published and given to the Park. The Hunter Allotment of Death Valley National Park was designated as a soil survey area by the Park. This soil survey was completed and a preliminary report was given to the Park in October 2001. Both surveys are currently on hold until such time as further funding is obtained.



A soil survey of the Timbisha newly designated reservation lands within the boundary of Death Valley National Park is scheduled for June. This will provide the Timbisha with the soils information necessary to effectively manage this area.

The Natural Resources Conservation Service has been working with Bureau of Land Management on setting up agreements to complete soil survey work on eight areas within the Mojave Desert. The new areas that are to be surveyed are:

- |                             |  |
|-----------------------------|--|
| 1. Jawbone Canyon OHV       | 5. Rand Mountains                        |
| 2. Dove Springs OHV         | 6. Johnson Valley OHV                    |
| 3. Jawbone-Butterbrecht ACC | 7. Stoddard Valley OHV                   |
| 4. Chemehuevi Wash          | 8. El Mirage Cooperative Management Area |

Carrie-Ann Houdeshell has been selected as Project Leader for the Johnson Valley OHV area and has already begun surveying this area. As for the other areas, start dates are still being determined.